

*Dr. Sunckler*

November 4, 1958

*copy to E. L.  
info.*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJ: LE CANG DAM

I had a visit with Mr. Dam in his office starting at 10 o'clock this date. We discussed his trip to the United States and many other subjects.

Mr. Dam felt that two months is not long enough for a trip of this kind unless the leadership participant confines his studies to one or two departments. He recommended that there not be so many stops in the future, but more time in each place. He pointed out San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago as the outstanding departments they visited and recommended a minimum of one week at each place, preferably more. Milwaukee should be seen, he thought, and for his particular interests more time should have been spent in Washington with the different Federal agencies.

He was very impressed with the friendship displayed by everyone. He stated that he had been warned in advance by many people in Vietnam, officials and otherwise, that he would be discriminated against because of his color and that Americans would not be friendly. He stated that never once did anyone look at his color nor could he detect that he was in any way discriminated against. Police, after a day or two of getting acquainted, would put their arms around him and treat him like a nephew. He raised the question as to why people here who had been in America would make such remarks. He was particularly loud in his praise of the personal friendship and interest shown them by Mr. Shelby.

Mr. Dam stated that the five days in Scotland Yard was a waste of time and should have been used in America. He was very disappointed in what he saw there and saw nothing he had not seen in America being done in a better way. He remarked that if he had wanted to see how the British did things, a trip to Singapore and Hong Kong would have served the same purpose--they have the same kind of records and operate in the same way. He does not recommend a stop in England in the future.

Mr. Dam was quite critical of his three traveling companions. He stated that they did not have the interests in things they could see and do, kept looking at their watches and wanting to move on. He claimed that they were critical of the American food all of the time but that he personally enjoyed it and put on 3-1/2 kilos; he often ate five meals a day.

He stated that both Tran Ba Thanh and Nguyen Van Hay are politicians, especially Mr. Hay. He stated that they were both below him ten years ago in rank and because of political connections have moved up fast. He mentioned the Can-Lao party as being their source of income.

In discussing his new assignment, Mr. Dam stated that his predecessor had been a slow, easy-going man who never pushed his employees, and as a result everyone had become lazy and inefficient. He stated that he has gotten rid of ten people already who refused to work and more will go later. He stated that they are producing now. He is cleaning the place up and changing the offices around. He suggested that I come back in a month to see the new changes.

He stated that they have become very lax in checking all foreigners remaining in Vietnam beyond their visa periods, especially Japanese and Philippinos. When I entered the room there were two Japanese talking to him who had their passports in hand and Dam was really giving them a lacing down. He signed their passports, threw them across the desk at the Japanese and told me later that they were Japanese who had entered on some other pretext and remained on in this country operating businesses, etc. He stated Joe ~~BANTON~~, former military attache at the Philippine Embassy, had made himself quite wealthy by illegal operations, taking articles in and out of the country in his diplomatic luggage.

We discussed the new police leadership participants. He is very strong for Tran van Tu. He said Tu is a very capable and honest man, not involved in any graft, and by all means should go as soon as possible. I mentioned Vuong Van Ve; he hesitated a bit and said, yes, he thought he would be a good man. He had been involved in graft in the past but thought he was OK now. I mentioned Commissioner Bay and he immediately put his hands over his face and said that he was very much involved in graft; that he had collaborated at one time with the Binh Xuyen; that he was very close to Madame Ngu. I told Dam that Bay had been recommended by both the Minister and the General and he said, well, in that case, of course, you will have to take him. As a police commissioner he is efficient but crooked. I mentioned Commissioner Que of No. 1 Precinct and Dam said that he was a very efficient man and clean, as far as he knew, and he felt that he should go in preference to Mr. Bay.

I asked Dam if he had had the opportunity of talking to the President or other officials about his trip. He stated that he had talked to the President on several occasions and reminded me that the President was his godfather. He also has talked to Mr. Hay twice, who is the President's Chief of Cabinet.

Mr. Dam did not leave me with the impression that he was in any way anti-American. In fact, the opposite impression was made. I plan to cultivate his acquaintance a little more so as to better evaluate him and his statements.

  
H.W. HOYT, Chief  
Police Administration Division

December 1, 1958



MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJ: Interview with Tran van Huong

I had an interview with Mr. Tran van Huong, Chief of Police of Hue, on November 25, 1958, and we discussed his trip to the United States and England with the first police leadership group.

His comments were that the treatment by the Americans was very good. Everywhere they went they had excellent reception and he voluntarily pointed out that at no time did he notice any discrimination because of his color.

When I asked him to volunteer criticisms or recommendations, the only thing he stated was the fact that the American police are too advanced for them to apply much of what they learned to Vietnam.

On specific questioning, he felt that two months was long enough. He did not feel the schedule was too tight. However, the first few days in the country after a long flight he felt one should have more time for rest because of the adjustment in time. Outside of that complaint, his schedule was O.K.

When asked about his free time, if he would prefer the weekends to be scheduled for sightseeing trips or visits, or left in a hotel to shift for himself, he said that he personally would prefer to be left alone and allowed to shift for himself. I asked if he had been entertained in any American homes, and he said only one, that of Mr. Shelby's.

Mr. Huong was critical of the repetition. For example, they saw Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Chicago, Detroit, and possibly one or two other cities, and in each place he claimed they had the same treatment--an orientation by the chief who explained the overall administration and then were taken through the various departments: communications, traffic, records, training, transportation, personnel, etc. He felt it would be better to spend more time with one department and study it rather thoroughly, and then when visiting some of the other departments, specialize in one area in each department rather than go through the entire department. He stated that it was

# 12  
54-98

apparent on several occasions that their visit had not been carefully planned. They were not told what they were to see in what particular department before visiting, and after arriving they were asked what they wanted to see in particular, which indicated to Mr. Huong that the host had not been advised what to show.

He recommended that in the future the leadership participants be divided so that they could study the areas they are interested in. For example, he felt that too much of his time was wasted in seeing the Treasury Department in Washington, Customs, Narcotics, etc., in which he, himself, had no particular interest. However, he would have liked to have seen more operations of a department in a city about the size of his own.

When I asked him what he would recommend for the itinerary for Mr. Tran van Tu, Director of the Saigon Police, he recommended that Mr. Tu go to one city and study its organization, recruitment procedures, operations, traffic, criminal investigation, auto theft, methods of checking ownership of cars, etc. Then he could join the others in the group for seeing some of the national police services in a less detailed manner.

The stop in London was O.K. as far as he was concerned. The amount of time there was sufficient.

It was difficult to get this information from Mr. Huong because he is somewhat of an introvert.

  
H. W. HOYT, Chief  
Police Administration Division

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cc: Dr. Smuckler✓  
Mr. Waltman